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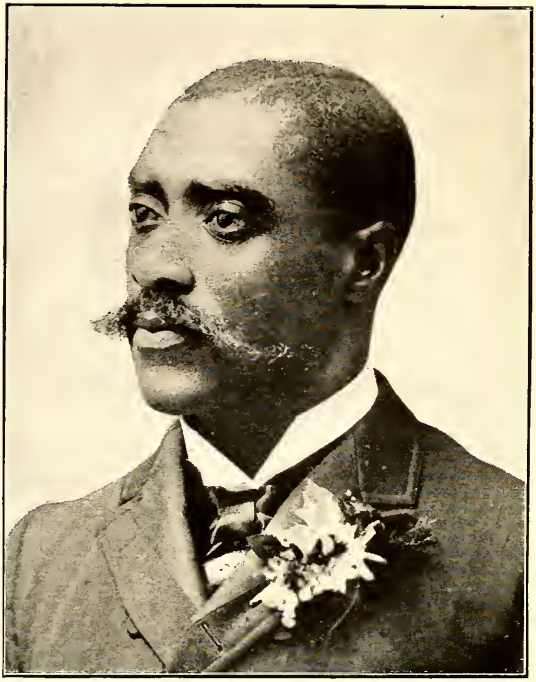

Yours truly,

THOMAS W. BURTON, M. D.

What Experience Has Taught Me

An Autobiography

OF

THOMAS WILLIAM BURTON
Doctor of Medicine, Springfield, Ohio

Cincinnati
Press of Jennings and Graham

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Dedicatory

To the Memory of My Mother

Though thirty-eight years have come
and gone
Since I have seen her face,
And still that love I have for her,
There is none can fill her place.

Her prayers to God for me she sent
When I was but a youth,
That I may be a man of worth,
Love God, and speak the truth.

Her spirit whispers to me still
From that eternal bliss,
Do right, my boy, while there on earth,
So you may come to this.

—Thomas W. Burton, M. D.

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BY THOMAS WILLIAM BURTON, M. D.
208 W. Main St., SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

Preface

My knowledge of the literary world being very limited, and knowing the numberless valuable productions which have been and are being sent broadcast throughout the world from the greatest minds, touching every phase of human existence, of every clime, and on every subject imaginable, make me feel abashed to offer to the public this book,

"What Experience Has Taught Me;"

but as God gave me this inspiration to make an effort to do something for the purpose of encouraging those who may be less fortunate than myself, I shall tell my own story, and in my own way, as I saw and experienced it. It shall be the aim and object of this book to point out things which are beneficial and practicable.

Yours very truly,

Thomas W. Burton, M. D.

Introduction

By way of introduction to the reading public of Dr. Thomas W. Burton, the author of this book, I desire to say that the effort that is made a success, though it may be opposed by difficulties, encourages many a hitherto despondent one.

Encouragement is what humanity stands in need of, and especially those who have not been in the midst of the most favorable surroundings for mental and moral development. I am sure that any one reading this volume will find much to inspire him to earnest and continued effort.

We have here the history of a man who, like Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, has come up from obscurity and by dint of hard study and honesty, and above all by being a man of God, has come to honorable distinction.

I cheerfully present Dr. Thomas W. Burton for the emulation of our young men. Go thou and do likewise.

JOHN WESLEY GAZAWAY.

August 26, 1907,
St. Paul A. M. E. Church,
Zanesville, Ohio.

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Birth and Parents

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND PARENTS

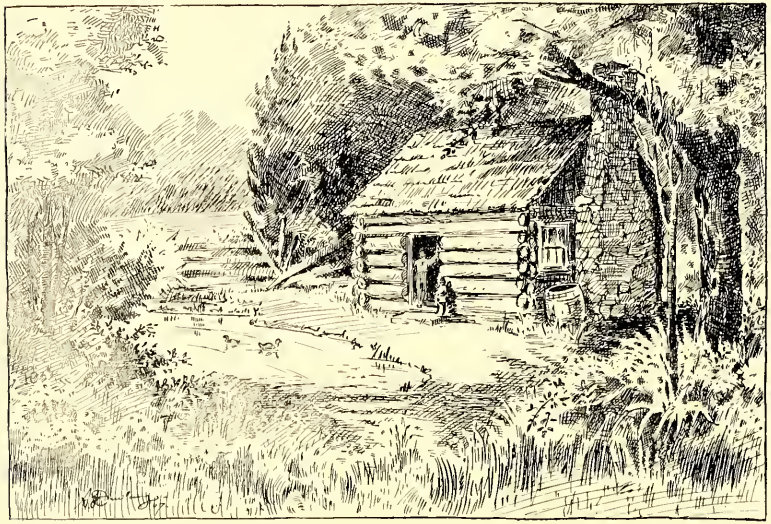
I HAVE been often asked by my friends why I did not write a book. I felt as though I had not accomplished anything for which to write a book. Then I thought perhaps I might drop a word of inspiration to those who may be less fortunate than myself, as it is my aim always to help, and not to hinder.

I was born May 4, 1860, in Madison County, Kentucky, a little way from Richmond (its county seat) and near the banks of Tates Creek and Shallow Ford. My father and mother were slaves at the time of my birth. My father's name was Edward, and the name of my mother was Eliza. I do n't remember very much about my father, because he died when I was only five years of age. I remember more about my mother, because I was nine years of age when she died. My father and mother were blessed

with fifteen children, of which I was the youngest.

There were other slaves on the place besides our family. My mother could weave, and did the weaving for those who were on the place. I can remember seeing mother sitting at her loom, day after day, weaving the blue and brown jeans for the men folks, and the linsey and tow-linen for the women and children. In summer time I wore only one garment, and that was a tow-linen shirt. It was made something on the order of the Mother Hubbard, and was very cool and nice, too.

My father and mother were not educated. They knew nothing about books, only my mother knew her alphabet; and that she taught me, and is about all I knew concerning an education until I became twenty-one years of age. Mother was a good woman; she was a member of the white Christian Church, as there was not a colored Church in that neighborhood. So every Sunday mother would take us children to Shallow Ford meeting-house, known as Mt. Gilead, until I was a big boy. The first two or three



THE OLD LOG CABIN IN WHICH THOMAS WAS BORN.

The little fellow by the door is Thomas.

rows of seats from the door, or rear of the church, were the places where the colored people had to sit; but they seemed to enjoy the services equally as well as the whites, and I am sure of one thing, aside from the line that was already drawn, I was made to feel more welcome there than I have been made to feel in some of my own Churches since I became a freeman. I have gone into Churches where the people stood so very far apart spiritually that it would make cold chills glide stealthily through my whole body.

In those days people were delighted to welcome strangers as well as those of their acquaintance in the church. As young as I was, I realized that I was a slave by often seeing the older folks sitting with their heads close together, and could hear them whisper, "Some day I believe we will be free." We children, of course, had to go to bed with the chickens. We were put in a trundle-bed, and then pushed under the big bed, there to remain until next morning. Very often after we were put to bed we could hear the older folks having such a good

feast, and it would smell—O, my!—so delicious; but we had to stay under there just the same. There was a counterpane made for the big bed so as to reach the floor, and when it was pulled down we little ones could not see out.

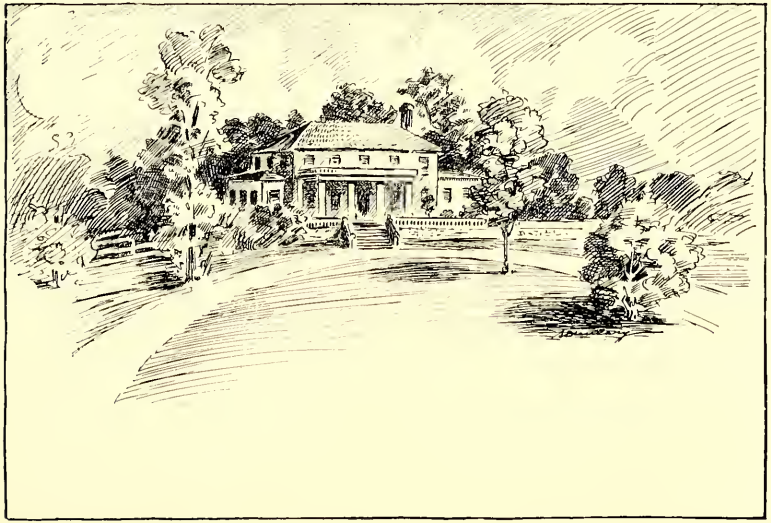
The old log-cabin in which I was born consisted of two rooms; one down, and the other up. We had to go up in the loft by means of a wooden ladder. In the lower room was a large fireplace which would easily heat the two rooms. One large rock, three by six feet, was placed in front of the fire for a hearth. On this big rock mother would do a great deal of the cooking by pulling the big coals out of the fireplace and placing them under the skillets, and the embers on the lids. The boils and stews would be cooked in pots and kettles, which hung over the fire on racks and tripods. Two windows were in this cabin; one in the lower room, and the other above. There were two doors, both below; one on each side of the house.

About one hundred feet north of the cabin stood, and still stands, the big house in which lived our owners. Around this house was a beau-

tiful lawn. The building was in a commodious place and could be seen from afar off. How well I enjoyed to play about that lawn and premises! When I became big enough to do chores I was kept somewhat busy at times.

People took great pride in training children those days, as they best could and knew how. They had instilled in them the moral virtues which Solomon so beautifully pointed out: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). Some people of to-day think if they are a little strict on their children they will either offend the child or discourage it. And the child, of course, will soon learn to take advantage of its parents' leniency and, as it grows older and wiser, it will and does in reality offend and discourage its parents. "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." (Prov. 19:8.) God corrects His children because He loves them, and not because He has the power to treat them cruelly. There is only one being who really does meanness for the fun there is in it, and that is the devil. "With-

hold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die." (Prov. 23: 13.) If a child is brought up carelessly, evidently he will transact business carelessly through life and become a dwarf in the commercial world. If a mother is telling her neighbor something which took place the day before, perhaps, one of her children is apt to take the words from her mouth and say, "That is not the way, mother; it was such and such a way." The mother, of course, thinking it cute in the child, will give way and let the child have the floor. Then the mother begins to tell the cute and great things the child has done, in the presence of the child. In my childhood days, when the old folks had company one would not know that there was a child on the place unless they saw us. Especially when they were talking, there was no danger of the children chipping in. If we were too loud or boisterous, just a look or pointing of the finger was enough. A child is often spoiled nowadays by the parents threatening it so very much, but never putting those threats into execution. Knowing the fact that it has been getting out



THE BIG HOUSE WHERE THOMAS' OWNERS LIVED.

of mischief so easily, it grows up caring but little for obligations. "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." (Prov. 29: 17.)

Parents, be positive, but not cruel; for these are God's jewels. They are the future generation, and are at your mercy to mold or shape in any fashion you desire.

Boyhood at the Old Homestead

CHAPTER II

BOYHOOD AT THE OLD HOMESTEAD

After the death of my mother, in 1869, I still remained at the old homstead until I was sixteen years of age, working for what I could eat and wear. I did not know what it was to work for wages until I left the place to stay. While on the place I learned to do all kinds of house and farm work. I certainly appreciate the fact that I can do all of these things even to-day. The man who can do these things is somewhat independent, even though he may not have a dollar. There were no schools in that neighborhood for colored children, and of course I had no chance to get an education at that time. But there was a college twenty miles south from where I lived, known as Berea, organized in 1855 by that fearless and devout Christian gentleman, Rev. J. G. Fee, for men, regardless of color or

nationality. Its name is borrowed from that place mentioned in the New Testament, whose inhabitants were "more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily." It had the words on the college seal as a motto: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men." I could hear the older ones about the place talking about that school so very much that it would make the fire of inspiration burn within me. Then, on the other hand, I would become discouraged when the sad news came that the Rev. John G. Fee was being mobbed on all sides because he took the stand he did, of an abolitionist, and established a mixed school, especially in a slave State. Upon one occasion, when Mr. Fee was preaching in Madison County, near by, on the subject of "Christian Union," and was accompanied by Robert Jones, a native of the county, and Messrs. Field and Marsh, residents in that vicinity, there was apprehension of danger, and Mr. Fee had been consulted as to the propriety of carrying guns. He said, "No; if I am disturbed I will appeal to the courts." He believed in the right of self-defense, but was op-

THOMAS HAULING HAY FROM THE MEADOW TO THE BARN.

posed to the practice of carrying arms, and believed they were more often a source of danger than a means of safety.

The sermon had commenced when a mob of sixty men with pistols and guns surrounded the house. One came in and said to Mr. Fee, "There are men here who wish you to stop and come out." He replied, "I am engaged in the exercise of a Constitutional right and a religious duty; please do not interrupt me," and preached on. The man went out, and soon two others returned and demanded that he come out. He preached on. They seized him and dragged him out, no resistance being made. Men with a rope swore they would hang him to the first tree unless he would promise to leave the county and never return He replied, "I am in your hands; I would not harm you if you harm me; the responsibility is with you; I can make no pledge; duty to God and my country forbid." They swore they would duck him in the Kentucky River as long as life was in him unless he would promise to leave the county. He said: "I am a native of the State. I believe slavery is wrong. I am

acting for the good of my country and all her people. You will know my motives at the judgment." He had proceeded but a few moments when one exclaimed, "We did n't come here to hear a sermon; let us do our work." They stripped Robert Jones naked, bent him down, and gave him thirty-three lashes with three sycamore rods. He was so injured that he could not walk the next day; but he made no pledges and did not leave. They said to Mr. Fee, "We will give you five hundred lashes if you do not leave the county and promise never to return." He knelt down and said, "I will take my suffering; I can make no pledge." Later two lawyers were engaged to prosecute in behalf of him and Jones. The mob met in Richmond and swore they would give five hundred lashes to any lawyer who would prosecute the cases. The grand jury never inquired into it. This is one of many such mobs through which Rev. John G. Fee went in those days.

The nearest I got to go to school was when I would take my young master to his school, a distance of about two miles, on horseback; so as

to bring the horse back, that he might be used for other purposes, such as going to the grist mill, plowing the corn, and going errands. Wherever I went I had to get back before night came on me too far, as the Kuklux were quite thick in that vicinity and did a great deal of harm to the colored people. Kuklux is the fantastic name of a secret society which was organized among many Southern secessionists after the Civil War for the purpose of overawing Negroes and newcomers from the North by all manner of violence, and they did some daring and hideous things to the colored people. Sometimes I would visit my cousin to spend the night, who lived not far away on Shallow Ford; and there being a public road alongside the creek, about nine or ten o'clock we would hear the roaring, thundering sounds from the horses' feet, seemingly about two thousand in number. When they came near some people's houses whose lamps and candles were burning, they would shout, "Lights out!" If the occupants of the house did not extinguish those lights at the command immediately, a bullet from without would. Of course, orders were usually

obeyed. It was the usual custom to go to people's houses at night, and see them greet one another in the dark, as there were no lights in the house except that which came from the fireplace, or grease lamps which gave a very poor light at the very best; and by the use of the latter the house was so impregnated with *amorphous carbon* that it would make it a little unpleasant for the people of this day and date. And yet, by such lights they would enjoy themselves at dances, parties quilting and apple-peeling in the fall of the year, in order that they might have dried apples for the winter. Later on, after the fear of the Kuklux had somewhat subsided, there was great enjoyment at corn-shucking in the fall of the year by the light of the moon. From twenty-five to thirty neighbormen would enter a corn field and husk it out in a single night. After the task was done a big feast would follow. People took such pride in those days in helping one another, and in return their efforts were appreciated.

When I was about the age of sixteen years I felt as though I ought to be earning some pocket

REV. JOHN G. FEE,

Founder of Berea College, Ky., 1858.

MRS. MATILDA H. FEE.

change, so as to be like some of the rest of the boys with whom I was associating. And, too, like most boys at that age who are inexperienced, I wanted to leave the plantation so as to see more of the world and its doings, but did n't know exactly how to go about it to get away. So one day I made the old boss mad, and instead of him telling me to leave, he simply gave me a good thrashing and told me to go to work. Delighted I was to obey. I shall never forget my early training on the farm. Farming in those days was somewhat rude, and seemed to those who took a part that they were making a great headway.

During the time of hay harvest several men were put in the field with a scythe each, who would cut the hay. Another crew of men would follow these with two-tine wooden pitchforks, the timber of which was either dogwood, beech, or black hickory. These pitchforks were prized very highly and could stand the test of strain really better than our most modern ones. The men would take these forks and windrow the hay. After this was done they would put it into

shocks, and then, by means of an ox-cart, would haul it near the edge of the meadow, and there put it into stacks.

When it came to the cutting of wheat, rye, oats, and barley, it was done by means of cradles. The man who could carry the cradle day after day, all through harvest, was serviceable to the community in which he lived, as also were those who could handle the scythe skillfully. Few men can handle a scythe successfully so as to make each stroke count while cutting hay or grass. When the rye, oats, barley, and wheat crops were not so very large, and the men pretty well up with their work, they would thrash out the grain by means of hickory sapplings. These sapplings were cut in lengths from six to eight feet; the small branches, of course, were trimmed off so as to be easily manipulated, and about eighteen inches from the larger end the sapplings were made flexible by pounding on them with a heavy hammer or something of the kind. A portion of the soil was scraped away so as to resemble a cock-pit. On the floor of this was spread a large sheet or canvas. The sheaves of

the grain were carefully placed one by the other, the heads of which were pointing toward the center of the pit. The men would pound on the heads of the sheaves with these sapplings until the grain was thoroughly threshed out. At the same time the straw was being put into a rick. To separate the grain from the chaff, the grain was scooped up and poured into the hopper of a large instrument known as a fan, with a man at the crank. Those who had large crops, in order to thrash the grain, would make a ring resembling a circus ring; it was prepared just as the above; but in this ring horses were placed, with boys on their backs. I had to ride in one of those rings till I was sick of it. It seemed as though it was such a pleasure to work on the farm at that time, and should be so to-day. After the ground was broken up we only had in way of small plows the shovel, double-shovel, and bull-tongue. Whole fields of corn had to be hoed in those days. I really believe that the corn does better, if no more than to keep it clean of weeds.

My First Experience in Working for Wages

CHAPTER III

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE IN WORKING FOR WAGES

After leaving my old homestead I hired to a man to work on a farm for four dollars per month. I held that job for twelve months. For a short time thereafter I fell into the hands of evil associates, and, of course, inexperienced and lacking the proper training early in life, I was led off, as is natural for man to love darkness rather than light, because of his evil deeds (John 3:19), I got out of work, and that led to idleness; from idleness to drunkenness. I used to think that man should always be able to meet conditions of environment; but I have learned from experience that environment has a great deal to do in making the man, especially so if the man is ignorant and inexperienced. There are thousands of men and women to-day in prisons who would not be there if at certain

times in their lives they could have gotten a few words of encouragement from those who were more fortunate than themselves. Not every man or woman you see in low places or in bad company has an evil heart in them. Certainly not. A great many are forced into these places on account of their environments, and while they become discouraged and remain there, a good many other people who are not there with these unfortunates but who are just as bad point the finger of scorn at those in the gutter instead of helping them out. There was that sinner who went of her own accord to the feast which Simon had prepared for Jesus Christ, and received a blessing because she had the right kind of motives and heart within her. (Luke 7:36-50.) Simon himself murmured because of the woman's former character and reputation. Man's mind is never still; it is always busily engaged. If it is not engaged in something edifying, it is engaged in something degrading.

After a man or woman has a certain amount of experience, he or she can set into operation vibratory forces which go out and which make their

impress felt somewhere, and which, arising into activity or uniting with other forces, set about to actualize their desires. Our thoughts make us what we are here and hereafter. Some people plod along daily without thought, care, ambition, or anxiety. Of course, it is a waste of time to try to reform such people as those. But do not judge all alike because they are all in the same crowd; but rather look after the ones who are willing to listen and follow a good advice when given at the right time and in the right way. I say at the right time and in the right way because those people can not be won at all times. "To every thing there is a season." (Eccl. 3.) If this class of people is approached in the right way, then, through the law that "like builds like," they will be able to come a little closer to it the next day, and still closer the next, and the next, until sooner or later comes the time when it will become natural for them to fall into the right channel. And once there, they very often become beacon lights, living only in the thought of love for all. And while they live in the thought of love for all, they will draw love to

them in return. But the one who lives in the thought of malice or hatred, malice and hatred will come back to them.

In order to be successful in life one should always look on the bright side of life. If we dwell upon the negative side it will prove to be destructive. If you let your daily talk be about sickness and disease, you will do yourself harm and those also who listen to you. This has reference to chronic complainers. But the young man whose mind is completely unhinged from the effects of strong drink is to be pitied. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14: 12.) This opinion was one under which I was laboring when my brain was in a morbid condition, and my nervous system, owing to the absorption of alcohol or to sympathy with the stomach, was stealing my intellectual and moral faculties because I was straying from that path in which my mother started me in youth. Strong drink was eating up my substances; it was devouring my health; it was gnawing off the fine edges of my sense of honor; in short, it was

ultimately swallowing me down body and soul. One need not expect an inebriate to reform by giving him punches, knocks, and blows, such as I received when in that predicament; but it requires time and patience and, above all, *self-will.* We are morally bound by our profession as Christians to throw all of our influence against intemperance in every form. Evidently we will find our labors ridiculed and our efforts thwarted by those whom we intend to benefit, like Isaiah, the prophet of old; but we should let nothing daunt us for the good of the cause and for the sake of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The world is certainly full of temptations of the flesh, and we are certainly our brother's keeper; we must put aside strong drink in every form: it is an enemy to mankind, dragging down the weak to eternal ruin. No one can live to himself alone. Every one should help the other. This tests one's Christianity, which is not true and sincere if it does not mean Christian brotherhood.

After being led by those who were equally

unfortunate as myself, for a number of months, I thought that I would get me another job. So another man hired me for the sum of eight dollars per month, and I worked for him for that price three consecutive years as a farm hand, and thought at the time that I was getting pretty fair wages; I am sure that I was doing a man's work, and felt myself much of a man physically.

At the close of each year I worked for that man I saved the better part of my earnings, as I did not need many clothes while I was working on a farm. My every-day apparel had so many patches about them that one could not tell the original pattern, especially in the fall of the year, during corn-cutting season. Then there seemed to have come over me another state of mind: to use up my money as fast as I earned it; it did n't matter at what I was working, for I would take my little drink occasionally when I was not on duty, until I began to move in a better circle of society, when I became spiritually-minded and recognized the fact, if I lived in that thought, it was to be in harmony and peace. I began to realize that God stood ready always to receive

those who were willing to come to Him and be accepted as His children. And that man forgets, but God never does.

So early in the spring of 1880 I was converted to God, and was baptized in Burnum's Pond, Richmond, Ky., the third Sunday in June of that year, by the Rev. Madison Campbell. After that I started out with a higher realization and to open myself more fully to the divine inflow, so much so that I could clearly see my insignificance as a man. The young lady with whom I was keeping company was a graduate from the high school, and I could not read nor write. I began to think that was an awful thing, and so it was. So I said to the people with whom I was living that I was going to quit drinking, and save up my money and go to school and get an education, so as to be like other young men with whom I was then associating. Quite a few of those who were not educated themselves would say to me, "Tom, I hear you are going to school!" And when I would answer in the affirmative they would say: "You had better go to work and pay your debts, and get yourself some clothes, be-

cause you are too old a man to be going to school. You 'll never learn nothing." But I had my mind made up to go to school and let drink alone, and nothing was going to stop me but sickness or death. So I started out to fulfill part of my advice in the way of paying my debts, but had no time to save money sufficient to buy clothes before winter term opened at Berea College, Kentucky, for that was a place I had been anxious to go to for many years, and now was my real opportunity.

Off for Berea College, Kentucky

CHAPTER IV

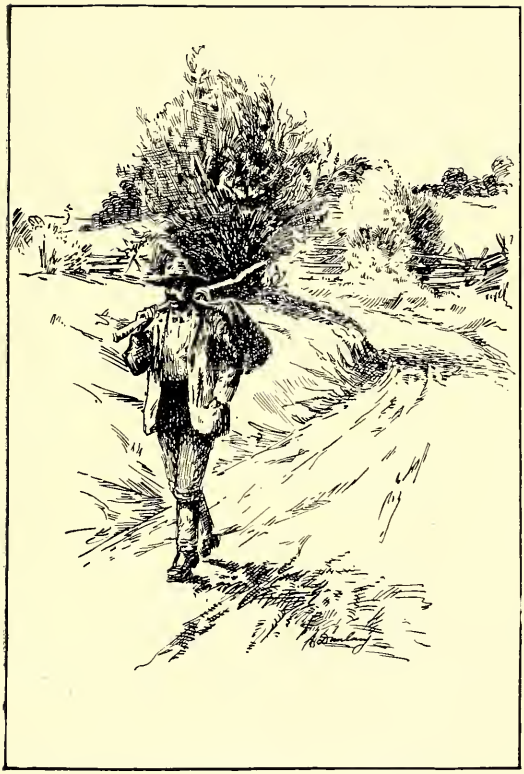
OFF FOR BEREA COLLEGE, KY.

It was during the month of January, 1881, I started for Berea, a distance of fifteen miles from Richmond, Ky., which I was then claiming as my home. No railroad connected the two places at that time, nothing but a hack line, which was run by Mr. Van Winkle, who lived in Berea. The fare was only seventy-five cents one way, but I thought I could not afford to pay that; so I started out the Big Hill Pike, walking, wearing a blue jeans suit, slouch hat, and stocky boots. The legs of my pantaloons were so small that I could not wear them on the outside of my big boots, therefore I just simply stuffed them within and went on. A carpet bag on my back, containing a few articles, and nine dollars and seventy-five cents in my pocket, I reached Berea College at nightfall the same day I started. After resting over night, I went along the next

morning with a lot of other boys to the treasurer's office to matriculate for the winter term.

At that time a student could work at the college, so as to pay a part of his schooling. At Howard Hall, a dormitory for the boys, was a mess club run by those who were not able to board at the Ladies' Hall, the regular boarding place. There were twenty-five students at this mess club waiting for a cook. After I matriculated in part, and returned to the hall, some one asked me if I could cook. "Why, sure thing," I remarked. I took the job and cooked for the boys that whole term, went to school, and did my own laundrying on Saturdays. I entered the primary department and learned to write a letter, and received an answer to it that winter for the first time in my life. May 4th of that year (1881) I was twenty-one years of age, and felt myself very important because I could read and write and was of age.

After Commencement of that year I went into the harvest field and did anything my hands could find to do; so when fall term opened I was there to hear the first stroke of the old college



Thomas off for Berea College, Ky., January 1, 1881.

bell. I then entered the intermediate department and remained in school the fall and winter terms, but had to go to work the spring term. I left with the determination to make money enough so as to return in the fall and remain in school the whole nine months. I found my way to Maysville, Ky., and there I worked for a contractor by the name of Mr. Tom Curr. He put me to digging sewers with a lot of other men, and from that to shoveling coal from the barges on the Ohio River. Thinking, perhaps, that I could make more clear money as a roustabout on the river, I got me a job as roustabout on the *Morning Mail,* a boat then running between Maysville and Cincinnati. That job reminded me more of slavery than any I had met since the real days of slavery, but I thought I could stand anything physically that any other man could. I worked with a new determination and returned to Berea that fall and entered the normal preparatory department, but had to leave again the following spring term because my money ran short. I found by this time that the farther advanced I got the more money it took to keep me in school.

That year there was a railroad to be built from Winchester, Ky., down to and across the Kentucky River; up through Shear's Bottom, past the Red House to Richmond; then to Berea, where there never was a railroad before; and from there to Round Stone, in the mountains. I got me a job on this road as steel driver and helped put through three tunnels, including that one in Berea. I worked at this job six months without stopping for school this time. And right here, again, is another proof that environment has a great deal to do in shaping the man.

While all of our advantages are to be improved, our opportunities to be enjoyed, and our responsibilities to be met and discharged, if we are negligent of our Christian duty we are sure to become pessimists, and pessimism leads to weakness. If we fail in caring for the interest of ourselves, as well as for the interest of our Maker, we must receive punishment. It is not the mere possession of a thing that works for good, but it is the use to which we put it. Advantages, money, and health amount to nothing unless rightly managed. So while on the rail-

road, driving steel, associated with rough fellows from all parts of the country, I became rough too, to a certain extent, in order to hold my own. Some may say that you do n't have to be rough because you are thrown in rough society. I learned from experience that you do have to become rough, and very rough, too, sometimes. Nearly every man, and boy, too, you saw would either have an ugly-looking knife or a revolver, and they did not carry them for fun. After working there a while, and after seeing and experiencing a few things, I started out with one revolver; but as time went on and I became a little more experienced in that business I carried a pistol on each hip, and a free-for-all fight was no more than a game of baseball would be to a civilized crowd. An officer was in very poor business to interfere with us unless he caught us unawares. So when I returned to school the following winter I took my pistols along, of course, with my reputation as a "scrapper."

There was a white man who lived in the village near the school, and who, too, was a former classmate of mine. He turned out to be a des-

perado, and at times he was a terror to the town and school. His brother and another student had a misunderstanding one day. The brother of the desperado told his side of the affair to suit himself, and without investigating the matter the desperado said he was going to kill the student at first sight; and he meant it. The student did not know the desperado, nor did the desperado know the student. And, too, the student was studying for the ministry. There were three white merchants who heard of the affair and offered the student revolvers; but he refused them, saying, "I will trust in the Lord." With an oath they said, "You had better trust in these pistols, because that man means to kill when he says he is going to kill." Some one told the student to ask counsel of me concerning the matter. By that time the student was getting somewhat worked up over the matter. So on Saturday afternoon the student came to see me. After he had related the affair, I did not say a word, but, knowing the desperado as I did, turned to my trunk, took out one of my best pistols (for I had three), well loaded, handed it to him, and

went on, and would not listen to any argument. With reluctance he took the pistol home. Just before Sunday-school time the next morning (for we all had to go to Sunday-school) the student said there came a peculiar feeling over him, such as he had never felt before; and that something seemed to say to him, "You had better put that pistol up your coat sleeve when you start for Sunday-school this morning, because you are going to meet your antagonist." The college bell began to peal for Sunday-school; the student could no longer remain in the house, and without realizing what he was doing he shoved the handle of the pistol up his sleeve, manipulating the muzzle with the fingers, and started off for Sunday-school. About one hundred yards away from the house he noticed two persons coming towards him riding double on horseback, and when they came near him he recognized the desperado's brother. As soon as the boy saw him he shouted, "There he is!" The desperado then, with an oath, began to make his usual hip movement; but it was too late, the student was too quick for him. When the student saw the han-

dle of the desperado's pistol he pointed my pistol in the desperado's face and said: "I dare you to move a muscle. If you do, I will shoot the top of your head off." And he meant what he said.

Back to Refinement Again

CHAPTER V

BACK TO REFINEMENT AGAIN

After I had entered the college preparatory department I began to think seriously as to what my future mission should be, and in order to be successful in life I must have God's help. So I asked God to reveal to me what He would like to have me do. There was a day set apart by the county superintendent of schools for all those who wished to teach school to go to Richmond, Ky., and take the examination. I availed myself of the opportunity and took the examination, and received a certificate. I taught the school at Waco, Ky., in 1885 and 1886, but powders, pills, and the sciences of medicine and surgery kept haunting me.

I went to the city of Indianapolis, Ind., in 1889 and went under the instructions of Dr. William Chavis, as my preceptor. The winter of 1890-91 was spent in the Medical College of Indiana. The term of 1892 being spent in the

Eclectic College of Physicians and Surgeons, from which I graduated on March 24, 1892. I had to partly work my way through the Indianapolis schools by waiting table, working in lumber yard and in private families. Some of these families certainly made me toe the mark; so much so that at one place were two girls also working: one did the cooking and the other was the nurse; and, of course, I was second help. The landlady's mother lived with her, and she too kept things moving along with such rapidity that the following verses came to me:

SERVANTS.

I am the second help,
While Annie is the cook;
Emma sees after the children,
Then the old woman takes a look.

She looks to keep us busy—
Good deal of that is done—,
Then goes back in a pace
As though she 's having fun.

She then reports to the young one,
To see what she will say;
Then it comes for my time
To drive them both away.

WACO (KY.) SCHOOL.
Taught by Thomas, 1885 and 1886.

Down in town we will go,
To see the styles that come,
Stop an hour a place,
Come out, and yet buy none.

Patience and spunk a man requires
To be in a coachman's place;
But, if liberty he expects,
Must fight to win the race.

Physically, or mentally, if required,—
If there's no other way,—
Let them know that you are a man,
And that you're there to stay.

We get very mad and vexed sometimes,
And declare, by the way, we will go;
But toil on another day,
And not a word of it so.

The work, the work, I have to do,
Both out of doors and in;
Go to the barn, hook up old Kate,
To drive away 'gain.

I feel as though a slave sometimes,
But little joy I see;
Just toil on from sun to sun,
As busy as a bee.

And so it goes every day,
Going on our feet;
But when it comes to the table,
We have but little to eat.

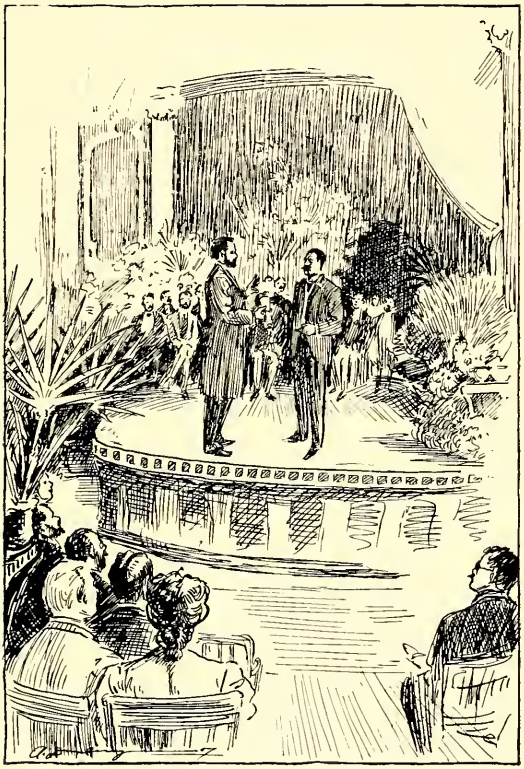
Such as apples, oranges, and bananas,
Those we never see,
Only with her in passing
Behind the lock and key.

It seems as though I am getting fat;
It's not from what I eat,—
I wash a rig once a day,
Maybe from my wet feet.

My rubber soles are full of holes,
He knows about the leaks;
Yet I wash away once a day,
Clear on for several weeks.

The young one is the meaner,
To speak the truth outright,
In stinginess and closeness;
She's seldom out of sight.

I shall go in a little while,
The girls may do as they please;
I am going to study the science,
And then I shall be at ease.



THOMAS RECEIVING THE DEGREE AS M. D.,
From the Eclectic College of Physicians and Surgeons,
Indianapolis, Ind., March 24, 1892.

After I became a full-fledged "M. D." I left Indianapolis for Springfield, Ohio, April 5, 1892, and started in the practice of medicine and surgery for the first time on my own responsibility, full of theory and vigor. On August 3, 1893, I was married to Miss Hattie B. Taylor, of Cynthiana, Ky., one of the best women that ever lived. Nine times out of ten if I follow her advice I will come out all right; and when I do n't I always come out all wrong.

The same year of my marriage I was commissioned by ex-President William McKinley, Jr., who was then Ohio's honored Governor, Assistant Surgeon of the Ninth Battalion Infantry, Ohio National Guard. This position carried with it the rank of Captain. That year we camped at Newark, Ohio, and on our return I made the following report:

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO, Sept. 8, 1893.

Major Scott Martin, Commanding Ninth Battalion Infantry, O. N. G., Springfield, Ohio.

SIR: I have the honor and pleasure to make the following report of the sanitary condition and surroundings of the Ninth Battalion Infan-

try, O. N. G., during its encampment at Newark, the State of Ohio, County of Licking, from August 24th to 29th, inclusive. The camp was situated in and behind a beautiful range of mounds, which were prepared by the Mound Builders, thus making a substantial fortification. The health of the Battalion was very good, with exception of a few cases of cholera morbus. The provisions made for the medical department were very good, and special commendation is due to the Quartermaster for his efficient work. We lack a hospital corps. Some of the best, purest, and coolest water in the country is found on these camp grounds. The camp grounds are somewhat elevated, thus affording a very good opportunity for drainage. The camp was illuminated by electric lights, thus reminding one of being in a city. In closing, I desire to say that I feel greatly under obligations to Major Scott Martin, Commander of the Battalion, for the kindness and interest shown by him to the Battalion in general.

THOMAS WM. BURTON,
Surgeon Ninth Battalion Infantry, O. N. G.

Being connected with the soldier boys during the time Spain governed the Island of Cuba,

RANGE OF MOUNDS NEAR NEWARK, OHIO, CAMP WM. McKINLEY.

Here Thomas camped while acting.Surgeon of 9th Battalion, O. N. G., 1893.

the last time with her iron and blood-stained hand, and after she had declared war with the United States, filled me greatly with the war spirit. A little while after the landing of General Antonio Maceo from Costa Rica, where he was then living, and against the wishes of the Spaniards, a fierce fight followed, in which several Cubans were killed. For some time afterwards the Cubans could not get any surgeons, nothing but nurses, especially for General Antonio Maceo. They advertised for physicians and surgeons. I fancied that I would appreciate being General Antonio Maceo's surgeon, but another was the successful one. About the middle of June, 1896, when the Spanish-American War was at its hottest, about fifty fearless young men came to me to be examined for the purpose of mustering into a company which I had already organized in part, for it was our intention to make up a regiment, and we succeeded by the last of the month and sent the following letter to the Adjutant General for admittance:

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO, July 1, 1896.

Adjutant General of Ohio Axline,
Columbus, Ohio.

HONORABLE SIR: We the citizens of Springfield, County of Clarke, State of Ohio, do respectfully petition to you, as a body of organized men, full of enthusiasm and patriotism, that we may be admitted in the service of the State of Ohio as the State Militia for the term of five years, unless sooner discharged in accordance with the Militia laws; that we may defend her borders and repel or prevent invasion; to prevent and suppress riots and insurrections; to maintain the honor and integrity of our State; and that we will diligently strive to attain the greatest practical correctness and efficiency in drill and discipline, and that we will perform our duties faithfully.

Respectfully yours, submitted,
THOMAS W. BURTON, M. D.,
Captain Commanding.

PROFESSOR E. W. CURRY,
The Negro Orator and Educator, Founder and President
of the Curry School, Urbana, Ohio.

First Negro Medical Society in Ohio

CHAPTER VI

FIRST NEGRO MEDICAL SOCIETY IN OHIO

In the year 1897, seeing the need of a State medical society composed of Negro physicians, my friend and colleague, Dr. H. R. Hawkins, of Xenia, Ohio, and I discussed the idea of such an organization and issued a call to all Negro physicians and surgeons in the State to meet in Xenia, Ohio, August 27, 1897. After the organization was perfected we named it the "Ohio Mutual Medical Association." I was chosen as its chairman for the ensuing year, and after I had been fully installed into office I delivered the following address in response to the address of welcome, *to-wit:*

"The Light is Just Ahead of Us."

In behalf of the medical profession of Ohio and these gentlemen here assembled on this unique occasion, I will make an attempt to re-

spond to the address of welcome. This assemblage is certainly unique because here are gentlemen of the medical profession who belong to the different schools, have left their respective fields of labor from east, west, north, and south throughout the State of Ohio, and have come together in one combined force for the betterment of their work, morally, socially, and intellectually. While it is a fact that the enactment of the State laws and the establishment of the State Board of Health and the Board of Medical Registration and Examination tends to induce higher medical education generally, yet it is necessary for the Negro doctor to organize, meet often, and learn to control himself in this direction.

Some may tell you that an organization of colored men in Ohio is not the proper thing, that the different medical societies in the counties and the State Medical Society will admit colored gentlemen of good standing in medicine, and that we are drawing the line on ourselves; but I fail to see it in that light, and will say to you that that is one of the reasons why the Negro is so far behind to-day, and because he is too dependent and not enough independent.

Inasmuch as other medical societies of Ohio

Thomas presiding over the Ohio State Association of Physicians, Surgeons, Dentists, and Pharmacists, Columbus, Ohio, May, 1906.

will admit gentlemen of the profession in good standing among them, so will we; and there will be no line drawn unless an individual draws it on himself, and that we can not help.

Negro physicians have organized State Medical Associations in six States of the South, as follows: the two Carolinas, Georgia, Tennessee, Texas, and Florida. What have we Northern brethren done along this line? It might have been bigotry and prejudice that kept the schools apart until now; but I venture to say, in behalf of the gentlemen present, that there is neither bigotry nor prejudice among them, and that they have come together for one common cause, and that is, to exchange their ideas in the advancement in science.

The question arises, Will it ever be that medicine will be one? So long as medicine exists, physicians will differ; but while that is true, it is not impossible for medicine to be one. The more I practice medicine the more I believe that the day is fast approaching; that is to say, it is possible for medical men to be united, with the privilege of according to every one liberty of opinion.

As far as science is concerned, there is little opportunity to differ. The brighter the true

light of science shines, the further will bigotry and prejudice roll into oblivion. The walls of paper that stand between parties in medicine are being perforated and torn to pieces; yea, the debris will be blown away to the four winds of the earth.

You will not give up your principles; you have a right to hold fast to them. Some men have suffered greatly for the faith that was in them.

Rev. John G. Fee has been mobbed and tortured a score of times for the faith that is in him, yet he has liberty of conscience. He was driven from place to place, but there was an indwelling conviction and a satisfaction of right that could not be taken from him.

The day is coming when we can join on the sciences, and when the differences of opinion on materia medica and therapeutics will be accounted for only as common differences amongst men, and when prejudice and intolerance will melt before the shining rays of science like snowflakes before the scorching sun.

Our practical progress must hinge upon a thorough knowledge of drugs, so as to raise the sinking constitution from the mire of disease, to give the slowing pendulum of life a little push,

to spur the natural recuperative forces on to victory.

We should not confine ourselves to text-book indication: we must use our own powers of reasoning and observation to give us the proper indications. The successful physician must be a free thinker and an earnest investigator.

The facts explain the power of habit. The man who cultivates the best side of his nature finds it easy to do good, and hard to do evil; while he who cultivates his worst qualities finds it easy to do wrong, and hard to do right.

The surgeon of the coming half century will apply his rays and take a photograph of the bones, and by the aid of the coming electric apparatus will examine the condition of the internal organs and view the condition of the stomach and bowels as readily as he now views the patient's tongue, throat, larynx, and the eyes. The deformities, position of fragments of bone in fractures, and dislocations, and all foreign bodies will be brought plainly to view.

Missiles in gunshot wounds will be revealed to the eye, and the cruel, death-dealing probe will be relegated to the instrument case, and called forth only in minor cases or in the absence of the better apparatus.

The physician of to-day is not the physician of seventy-five years ago; neither is he the physician of seventy-five years hence. Some of you, perhaps, call to memory some of the modes of practice and customs of the first-named period of seventy-five years ago and have some knowledge of the previous seventy-five years.

A large per cent of the physicians had comparatively little more training than could be gathered from a few medical books written by the physicians of foreign lands, or perhaps a few months' reading in the office of some doctor who had obtained his education in the same way, or perhaps one term of lectures of sixteen weeks in a medical school.

The higher medical education now required of physicians is working wonderful results, and we welcome any means that will help it along. It is a felicity we enjoy in common to be citizens of a country without a peer, under a political order whose unrivaled excellence excites the admiration and envy of the world. But no man should be placed in position to prescribe for the venerated patient whose education, experience, and training have not in some degree qualified him to comprehend the nature of the maladies he is to treat, to distinguish the chronic

diseases of the body politic from its passing inflammation, the growing pains of a vigorous and lusty life from the violent distempers of an infected and decaying body. He should have that all-roundness of observation which comes from a knowledge of affairs and a touch of elbows with the people. He should not be content with holding right opinions, but should exert himself to make them prevalent.

Your success in the practice of medicine must depend upon practical intellect, inexhaustible energy, and invincible determination. Your labor must continue to be prodigious, your wisdom and tact equal to your industry.

Successful men do not owe their elevation to accidents or tricks, but rather to their patience and persistent energy. The field of medicine grows prodigiously every year, so that to-day the strongest minds are unable to grasp the innumerable scientific questions in medicine.

Now, gentlemen, let us do all we can to promote the method of curing disease and to instruct those less consistent in practice than ourselves. We should be thoroughly honest in our convictions, making no effort to appear what we are not. Never be influenced by any but the most upright and conscientious motives.

Let us do the best we can on all occasions, conscientiously discharge our duties, and be ever in search of new facts that may benefit our patients. Much of our success will depend on our personal qualities; and intelligent brain, kind nature, sympathetic heart, and skilled hand must be united. A man who can enter a sickroom and diffuse about him a sense of repose and confidence is certain of increasing his practice rapidly.

Association Re-established.

After existing about two years the Association became defunct, for the lack of interest taken by its members. Negro physicians and surgeons at that time in the State of Ohio were scarce, and the most of them belonged to white associations and thought it useless to belong to two societies of the same kind; hence it was hard to get them to see the need of their own.

In the meantime I connected myself with the National Medical Association and was made Vice-President of Ohio from that grand body which met in Lexington, Ky., in 1904. It was the duty of the Vice-President from each State to organize his or her State in which they lived, and center them into the National.

The National Medical Association is composed of all physicians, dentists, and pharmacists who are graduates of reputable schools, who have met the requirements of their State Boards, and are in good standing in their local organizations.

The winter of 1905 I issued another call to all Negro physicians, dentists, and pharmacists in Ohio (finding sixty-five) to assemble in Sprinfield the second Tuesday in May for the purpose of organizing a medical society composed of the above-named branches. Six doctors, together with one dentist, came. We organized. I was elected its President, and we held sessions for two days, which were very interesting, I assure. During our session I made the following address:

"SCIENCE DIFFERS BUT LITTLE."

Doctors, Ladies, and Gentlemen: I congratulate you on coming here. Your leaving your fields of labor and gathering here upon this occasion at this hour means a step forward in the advancement of medical science in this our beloved State.

If we form only a nucleus in the way of a

State Association, and keep it nurtured for one year, we shall have a foundation on which to build one of the best organizations of its kind.

You need not fear nor be dismayed, for you have among you the material with which to work. In ability you are second to none. In experience you have shown yourselves equal to every emergency, and in integrity you have proved yourselves a credit to the community in which you live.

To be a successful practitioner one must attend State and National Associations, as well as peruse his journals. If any one fails to do this, it will be but a question of time till he is relegated to the rear, to a place where he is best fitted.

People of to-day do not dwell upon the school so much as they do upon the individual. I do not agree with Dr. Vale Osler, who is a Canadian by birth and an American only by adoption, when he says that "nothing in the world is accomplished by a man more than forty years old," and that "men of sixty should be retired or chloroformed," and that "American medical colleges are teaching hybrid systems of medicine and producing ignorant practitioners," and that "Europe is far ahead of the United States in

DR. H. R. HAWKINS,
Xenia, Ohio.
Post Graduate, Hahneman College, Philadelphia, Pa.

medical universities." Evidently greater strides in medicine and surgery have been made in America in the last forty years than in Europe, and by this we mean American medicine in general.

In my opinion a man is at his best at forty; but we, as Negro physicians, dentists, and druggists, will have to outlive a mountain of obstacles and impediments. A third of the patients we chance to get employ us on probation or for convenience, and we are not kept very long before we are discharged and one of the opposite race takes our place and holds the patients, though the time may be long or short. Therefore he gets both money and credit. It has been my experience, whenever these changes take place I am not aware of it until the thing has been done. How shall our patients be taught to place confidence in us as practitioners? How shall they be taught to realize that you are a master of your situation? I find that human nature is the same all along the line of time. As far back as 29 A. D., when Christ was performing so many miracles before the eyes of the people, and even while He was passing along in one of His walks, perhaps on His way to Mount Olivet, where He frequently went for a time of quiet meditation,

He saw a blind man sitting by the roadside and had compassion on him, touched his eyes, and thus restored his sight. And yet, on account of this antipathy they had for Him, they had no confidence in Christ; but He left this great lesson for us, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." So, whatever may be said and done about us, we should strive to do our duty along the line of our profession.

It is not at all times we treat a patient the way the patient or his friends think we ought to treat them; but if the doctor knows that he is right in his diagnosis and treatment, he should stick to his tactics or quit the case. It will be better to stop in time than to be sued for malpractice.

There was a time before we could stand alone, when it was necessary to have some outsider see to it that we did our work well.

The physician of to-day is not the physician of forty years ago, neither is he the physician of forty years hence. As far as science is concerned, there is little opportunity to differ. The brighter the true light of science shines, the farther will bigotry and prejudice roll into oblivion. The walls of paper that stand between parties

in medicine are being perforated and torn to pieces; yea, the debris will be blown away to the four winds of the earth.

The day is coming when we can join on the sciences, and when the differences of opinion on materia medica and therapeutics will be accounted only as common differences amongst men, and when prejudice and intolerance will melt before the shining rays of science like snowflakes before the scorching sun. Our practical progress must hinge upon a thorough knowledge of drugs, so as to raise the sinking constitution from the mire of disease to give the slowing pendulum of life a little push, to spur the natural recuperative forces on to victory.

At the second meeting, in May, 1906, which was held in Columbus, we were very much encouraged on account of the increased membership and the interest shown in our Association. At the close of the second day's session I was again elected the President for the ensuing year.

May, 1907, we met in Cincinnati. At this meeting some of the best representatives in the professions of medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy were present, became members, and took

active part in discussing the problems of their peculiar work, which were of great interest to all present. At the close of the last day's session the physicians of Cincinnati banqueted us at the Douglass Hotel. We sat down at the table at ten P. M., and got up at three next morning. We had a delightful time, I assure you. At the session Dr. Frank W. Johnson, of Cincinnati, was elected President for the ensuing year.

The fourth session was held in Dayton, Ohio, May, 1908, which was the best one of them all. There they elected Dr. William J. Woodlin, of Columbus, to the chair of President.

The Association will hold its next session in Xenia and Wilberforce the second week in June, 1909.

I am thankful to see that my work has not been spent in vain along this line, and I feel sure that the interest and confidence will become more established at each session.

Thomas reducing a dislocated arm by making an extension and counter-extension movements.

Member of Faculty, Curry Institute

CHAPTER VII

MEMBER OF FACULTY, CURRY INSTITUTE

It was during the year 1896 that I was elected as a member of the Faculty of the Curry Institute, which was then located in Mechanicsburg, Ohio, but is now in Urbana, Ohio. I have been connected with the institute in some way ever since.

Professor E. W. B. Curry, its founder, deserves great credit for his energetic manner and courage. I took great delight in helping Professor Curry because he was a young man and had the courage to manipulate such an undertaking, and has fostered his plans to the credit of himself and all those who have seen fit to aid him; and to-day he is doing a great work in Urbana along educational lines.

When I was first connected with that institution I was elected to the chair of Physiology.

A great many people, of course, criticised the school because its President was so young and because there were so few students, and many other things were said then that would not be said now. One person criticised the professor and his school to me to such an extent that these verses came to me:

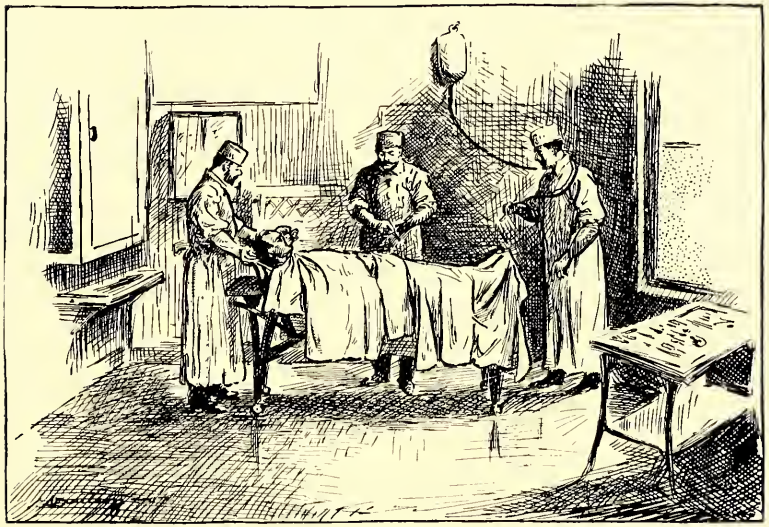
CEASE NOT.

Cease not to strive because you are poor,
Cease not to do the right;
Press bravely to the upward mark
With vigor, main, and might.

Antagonized you will be on every hand
On account of your wit and zeal;
The influence of your mighty power
Forever make them feel.

The work, the work, we ought to do
In this our native land,
Where intelligence seems most bright
Of all the place for man.

Each one of us must play our part,
In spite of what they say;
Play it in the way we think it best,
Play it in our own way.



THOMAS REMOVING A FIBRO-CYSTIC TUMOR.

The young ambitious Negro boy
Is held as though by a rope;
He struggles hard to reach the goal
Built upon nothing but hope.

The work you do may seem very small
To those who are not of a part;
But you are molding character,
Considering from whence you start.

Before entering upon my work there I gave the students a talk in a general way, of which the following is a part:

"Young Men, Be Strong."

Our life is a warfare; our days are but few; our pathway is so obstructed by prejudice and ocstracism that it will take none but the strong to safely reach the goal. It is true that young men must have encouragement in order to aid them in the great life-struggle.

They must be taught by kind influence and deeds, and not governed so much by the rod of iron. They must be coaxed, and not driven.

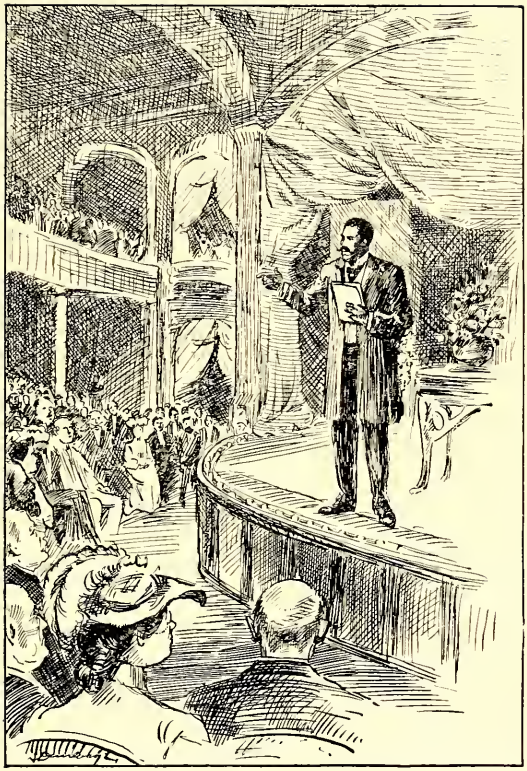
Young men are like children, in that they are great imitators. If the majority of old men

who are refined and cultured would set better examples and lead better lives themselves, I am sure the majority of young men would imitate them. How encouraging are those words from the First Epistle of John, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong!" They were strong because they had kept the faith and overcome the wicked ones.

If those who are so wrapped up in faith and righteousness are to have such encouraging words, how much more ought those who are so unfortunate as to be deprived of those golden opportunities!

Now, young men, be strong! even if the world hate you, for God is no respecter of persons. Paul, in his letter to First Timothy, says, "For the love of money is the root of all evil." That does not mean because you are young you are to throw away your money or spend it foolishly, but to be very greedy in self-gain, that "he troubleth his own house." Prov. 15: 27.

You will find, too, that it takes money to help make you strong in the great warfare of life as well as in good behavior and education.



Thomas reading a paper before the Ohio State Eclectic Medical Association, Put-in-Bay, Ohio, July, 1902. Thomas the only colored member.

How well one is recognized when he has money! and how much despised when he has none! "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children." Prov. 13: 22. "But he that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." Prov. 21: 17.

As you grow older and venture into business for yourselves, you will find to your surprise that your troubles have just begun. Those whom you took to be your friends will also treat you coolly and say discouraging things concerning your enterprise, and your qualifications and fitness for running such a business.

As a matter of course they will stand you off for some of your goods and go elsewhere and pay cash, at the same time expecting just as much from you as from the man who received the cash. I think we ought to study the young men more. No one can be a successful teacher until he first learns his pupils, for no two have the same disposition. After we have learned them as we should, then put each one upon his merit and worth, and push him from one good thing to another.

During the year 1897 I had the pleasure of writing a few articles for the *Eclectic Medical Journal,* printed monthly at Cincinnati, Ohio. I received a very complimentary letter from the editor concerning one of them, which was written about an "Anencephalous Monster," as follows:

CINCINNATI, OHIO, April 26, 1897.

T. W. Burton, M. D.

DEAR DOCTOR: The Academy of Medicine, Paris, France, has noticed your article in our *Journal,* which is a very high honor, indeed, to you, and also to our *Journal.* They beg of us that we send them three photographs of the specimen, from which they can make suitable cuts or possibly plaster casts for their museum.

I think it would be greatly to your interest if you would mail me the three photos which were especially made for the Helleburgh Company, who make the cuts for us.

In regard to the third little electro, we were under the impression that you would have no use for it, and we kept it, as it would probably do for publication for some book in the future.

Please let us hear from you.

Respectfully,

J. K. SCUDDER, M. D.

Since I have been in the practice of medicine and surgery I have had the pleasure of performing both minor and major operations. While I like to operate, I am not an alarmist. I find it is good surgery to save all you can. A piece of a finger is better than an artificial one. The surgeon should give the fullest amount of encouragement to his nervous and timid patients. The surgeon must be master of his situation, not excitable, and go about his several duties in a quiet and dignified manner.

Sometimes developments of unexpected complications arise during the time of the operation. If these occur, the surgeon should not lose his head.

The practice of medicine is a peculiar thing. A patient will get well quicker if he has the physician he desires to treat him. I believe every one ought to have whom he wants to treat him; but very often the friends of the patient or an enemy of the attending physician will, during the absence of the doctor in charge, call in another physician, and the change perhaps will do that patient harm. And the person who will

do that should not be trusted any more than a thief in the night. Such a change often gives the attending physician a bad name. The duration of certain diseases is regulated by fixed laws. They will not end until after the lapse of a certain number of days, and hardly ever exceed this period.

Some people will get well simply by suggestion; that is, by telling them to do certain things; and the patient believing what you say is true, will get well. It seems strange, but it is nevertheless a fact, the American people like to be humbugged.

If you tell some people the truth, and tell them for their own good, they will not believe you, simply because you do n't look to suit their fancy.

I have often thought, and think now, that the devil will get more people on account of prejudice and ostracism which they carry with them daily than any or all the sins they commit.

Irreverence can show itself in many ways. Pride and self-interest must give way to great principles. Inasmuch as each one has his or her

DR. WILLIAM CHAVIS,
Dr. Thomas W. Burton's preceptor.

work in the world, they should be encouraged to do it. It is not always easy to do right, I admit; but to whom much is entrusted, from him much is expected. But man lights up the night, that he may lengthen day in his effort to secure that which he does not need, and murders to gain it. He slays regardless of his demands, and consumes regardless of his needs. All for money and self.

Sent as a Delegate to National Negro Business League

CHAPTER VIII

SENT AS A DELEGATE TO NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE

The local Business League in Springfield felt it their duty to send a delegate to the National Negro Business League, which met in the city of Chicago, Ill., in 1901, and the honor fell upon me to represent them and to bring back a true report of the proceedings of that session, which I did as follows:

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE IN HANDEL HALL, 46-48 RANDOLPH STREET.

CHICAGO, ILL., August 21-23, 1901.

At ten o'clock, A. M., August 21st, the meeting was called to order by A. W. F. Taylor, President of a local League in Chicago. Invocation by Rev. Dr. J. W. E. Bowen, of Alabama. After which an address of welcome on behalf of the State by a member of the Governor's staff was delivered; this address was short, but interesting.

The Governor, Richard Yates, was not in the State.

An address of welcome on behalf of the city of Chicago was to have been delivered by the Mayor of this city, Hon. Carter H. Harrison, and he, too, was out of the city, and a member of his staff kindly consented to address us. His talk was interesting in regard to the progress the Negro is making. He said that it took the Anglo-Saxon race four hundred years to accomplish what the Negro has in the short period of time he has been free. He said that he was a Democrat, but not one of those Benjamin Tillman kind. He scored Mr. Tillman for his recent action, and remarks on lynching.

Booker T. Washington was next introduced, but could not be heard for a long time on account of the prolonged applause. After a time he said: "Ladies and Gentlemen,—This is not a meeting of oratory and speech-making, but a meeting of workers. Our watchword and motto should be, 'Forward, March!'" He pointed to the place of the first meeting, in Boston, last year, with pride, because it was the place where the Negro first shed his blood for freedom. Then he spoke in the highest terms of Illinois, the place of the second meeting, the home of the

great emancipator. "Again, all through the last year's session order was so harmonious that not a man raised to the point of order. It is what we do that makes us men and women, and what we do n't do. There is no place like the South, with all its ups and downs, which affords the Negro such excellent opportunities. The Negro should begin at the bottom and go up."

It was said by one during the session that Washington had the same control over those men and women that brain had over matter. He could handle them so very easily.

Giles B. Jackson, Esq., of Richmond, Va., gave an account of the Business League in Virginia with the remarks, "We may be held back, but not kept back." He said that the organization had such an influence in Virginia that it caused business men to respect them perhaps where they would not otherwise.

Rev. W. L. Taylor, Richmond, Va., had a very interesting paper on "Business Features of the Order of True Reformers," an organization that takes in children from three to fourteen years old. This organization was started in 1885 and has since banked seven million dollars. During Cleveland's last administration the white banks failed to cash an order for fifty dollars.

The School Board was in need of seventeen thousand dollars. They telephoned to the Negro bank to see if they could get the required amount. The answer was that "you can get one hundred thousand dollars." They telephoned again, thinking that maybe the black boys were mistaken. They got the same answer; so they came to the Negro bank and found it so busy that they had to wait some time before they could wait on them. The Board presented their check, and was waited upon so quickly they were so struck that they could not leave for some time, watching the black boys do business.

This bank or company has a number of buildings and newspaper plants, a mercantile department which brings in nineteen thousand dollars per year, and an old folks' department worth fourteen thousand dollars (a farm). In each department of this bank their books must show that he or she is all right, and not his or her appearance. They have a chief over all, and a man who is called "accountant." These two men must agree, or else something is wrong. This bank does nineteen thousand dollars' worth of business per week. The Board of Directors of the bank is not satisfied with this; they make the cashier get all the money to correspond with

all of these books and lay it on the table every Saturday and show to those present.

Mr. Taylor says that we are too ready to criticise one another in business. He then called his private secretary to stand up, who is just a boy of nineteen years and as black as the derby hat he wore. Mr. Taylor says, "Do you think that there is any white blood in that boy?"

Mr. J. A. Wilson, of Kansas City, Mo., spoke of what the Twin City Business Association is accomplishing; he spoke of the progress and various kinds of businesses the Negro is doing in that city.

Theodore W. Jones, of Chicago, Ill., had a paper entitled "Can the Negro Succeed as a Business Man?" In every vocation of life the Negro needs more grit and backbone, although he has come from the slave cabin to the professor's chair. The Negro must quit stumbling over impediments of his own and go forward.

Evening Session, 8 P. M.

The Negro Woman's Business Club of Chicago, and its achievements, was spoken of by Mrs. Alberta M. Smith, of Chicago, Ill. The club was organized in 1892 for social, political, and industrial purposes. Membership at present numbering 14,015; worth, $3,000.

They have an Old Folks' Home connected with it. The typewriting alone cost one hundred dollars per month. She insisted on us all to be natural and not put on so as to pretend we are more than we really are.

Mr. Corbin, of Arkansas, spoke of the wealth of the Negro there and in the South. He said that one Mr. Wiley Jones was the richest man there, his wealth being estimated at one hundred million dollars. About the time Mr. Corbin finished reading his paper Mr. Washington received a telegram from President McKinley, congratulating him and the League. It was stated by Mr. Washington that those who wish to become lifelong members of the League could do so by paying twenty-five dollars. There were several who did so. Also several of the white people joined as lifelong members.

Judge Gibbs, of Little Rock, Ark., who is an ex-judge of Madagascar, spoke of his start in life and travels, to the present. He spoke of going on the postmaster's bond in Little Rock, who is a white man, for forty thousand dollars. He said, "When you are going into business and fail, again try; if you fail again, try, try; if you fail again, try, try, try!"

Mr. Charles Banks, of Clarksdale, Miss.,

gave us a talk on the merchandising. He dwelt to a great extent as to how goods should be bought and sold, and our places of business properly kept. He has increased in wealth enough from his trade as a merchant for his taxes to amount to three hundred dollars per year.

William Oscar Murphy, of Atlanta, Ga., had a paper on "The Grocery Business." He said that he was born a grocer because his father was keeping a grocery when he was born, and to-day he has property worth thirty-five thousand dollars, all unincumbered.

A. N. Johnson, of Mobile, Ala., who is a druggist, editor of a weekly newspaper, and an undertaker, gave us an interesting talk on Negro business enterprises of Mobile. Out of thirty-six clerks in the postoffice in Mobile, twenty-eight of them are Negroes. One Negro named Mr. Peters, by the way, who was present at the meeting, owns forty-eight houses and lots in Mobile, Ala. The rating of business done by Negroes in Mobile in the various businesses ranges from eight dollars to seventy-five dollars per day. One Negro in the furniture business has an income of one hundred dollars per day.

THURSDAY MORNING, 10 O'CLOCK.

Prayer by Rev. Dr. Morse, of Arkansas. The doctor is also a business man, and has been for twenty-five years. He is in the drygoods business. In a town of three thousand inhabitants the Negroes are in forty-three different kinds of business, and ask for a reasonable portion of business, not all. Reverses, he said, come to all races. So when they fail, they should try again.

Dr. Willis S. Sterris gave us a talk on the drug business. The doctor is located in Decatur, Ala. He said that there is in the State of Alabama an association composed of doctors of medicine, doctors of dental surgery, and doctors of pharmacy, of which he is President. The members of this association all own their homes except three.

Mr. Russell, of St. Louis, Mo., gave us an interesting talk on the undertaking business. He started in business in 1894 in the rear of an old stable, with one horse and a spring wagon. Not one of the other undertakers nor stables would hire to him at twenty-five dollars per day, and to-day his income annually, from funerals alone, amounts to over twenty-five thousand dollars. Since he became an undertaker he has ed-

ucated two of his sisters; one of them clerks for him in the undertaking establishment, and the other clerks in a grocery, also owned by him.

Mr. G. E. Jones, of Little Rock, Ark., who owns and conducts an undertaking establishment, a livery stable, tailor shop, and a drug-store, and also a business block known as the Jones Block, all of which are paid for, said it really seemed for a while that no race had any money and carried on any business but the Negro.

The colored business women of the East were well represented by Mrs. Dora A. Miller, Brooklyn, N. Y. Mrs. Miller stated that they have a club, the membership of which numbers seventy-five women. Every member of this club was in business for herself; such as regalia-making, grocery-keeping, bakeries, hand-painting, dye houses, ladies' exchange, chiropodist, and so on. The ladies' exchange, she said, found many a home for girls who could not find work themselves.

A Mrs. Lewis, of Springfield, Ill., told of her start in the hair-dressing business twenty-six years ago on fifty dollars, and has saved thirty-six thousand dollars and taught others the trade.

Mr. Gilbert C. Harris, of Boston, Mass., also

a wigmaker and hair-dresser, carried a capital stock of ten thousand dollars in the hair business, all of which is his.

Walter P. Hall, of Philadelphia, Pa., had a paper on the "Game and Poultry Business." This business brought him a yearly income of fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars.

Mrs. Emma L. Pitts, of Macon, Ga., told us the way she started in the millinery and dress-making business. She said that her husband died, leaving her without money, and her health would not allow her to take in washing; so, in order to help several girls who were idle, she started in the business on nothing, and to-day she employs one hundred girls. She spoke of wanting to raise money enough to put into her place of business more machinery. So very excellent was her paper, as soon as she had taken her seat, one Mr. Martin Ferguson, of Jacksonville, Fla., arose with a fiery speech and, holding up a five-dollar bill, said that there ought to be thirty men in the house who would give five dollars to a woman who had the courage to come all the way from Georgia to tell us what she was doing there. Mr. Booker T. Washington and two other men gave five dollars for said purpose.

There was no night session Thursday evening, but instead there was a banquet tendered the officers and delegates at First Regiment Armory, at Sixteenth and Michigan Boulevard. Mr. Washington was the center of attraction. Twenty-five thousand people were present. After the speaking the platform was removed and one thousand took part in dancing at one time. It was one of the prettiest sights I witnessed while in Chicago. It impressed Mr. Washington so much that he spoke of it at the next day's session.

We were also highly entertained by another club, known as the Appomattox, at its parlors, No. 3144 Wabash Avenue.

Friday Morning, 10 O'Clock.

Fred D. Patterson, Greenfield, Ohio, gave an interesting talk on the carriage manufacturing. He said that a college education had nothing to do with making a successful business man. Often he thought his father was wrong, but every time it was he who was wrong, and his father was right. He finds, in carriage making, it takes a man of common sense, push, and hustle.

Mr. Martin Ferguson, of Jacksonville, Fla.,

told of his experience as an ice dealer and in the livery stable business. He started on nothing, but now owns both of these places of business.

A. M. Boyd, of Nashville, Tenn., told how he started about fifteen years ago with two pencils and paper, and to-day he has one of the largest printing establishments in the South. He employs 125 men and women.

The election of officers then followed.

Mr. Fairweather, of Newport, R. I., a blacksmith; forty years' experience. Out of sixty-five horses shod by him, about fifteen belong to Negroes. He said that the Negro North has not been educated up to patronize one another as yet. He said that most any blacksmith can put a shoe on a horse; but when it comes to the scientific part of shoeing, very few can do that. When it comes to fast trotting horses, to keep them from forging and interfering, it is more than a notion to stop them.

Mr. J. C. Napier, of Nashville, Tenn., gave an interesting talk on real estate. He said that prejudice in the South proved an advantage to the Negro rather than a hindrance.

C. H. Smiley, of Chicago, Ill., gave us an interesting talk on catering. He said that he started waiting table in 1890, with fifty cents.

He waited on a lady who soon took a trip East, and when she came back she made the assertion that there was only one man in Chicago who could serve a party, and that was a black man by the name of C. H. Smiley. From that his fame started. He spoke of his linen, among other things. He has napkins from two dollars per dozen to fifteen dollars a piece; tablecloths from five dollars a piece to eight hundred dollars a piece. His wealth is now estimated at two hundred thousand dollars. I had the pleasure of visiting his place of business.

Mr. John S. Tramer, of Philadelphia, Pa., said that he would rather his son be in business for himself than to hold a government position.

Friday afternoon Mr. Armour chartered a train pulling coaches and took all of us delegates, even women and children, free of charge, to his slaughterhouses and stockyards. It was the most interesting sight of anything I saw while in Chicago. They kill ten thousand hogs a day in that one plant alone; 2,044 head of cattle a day. The stockyards of Chicago are as large as Springfield.

At last we came to the evening session.

One Mr. Clifford, of West Virginia, told the League that where he lived land can be bought

for fifty to seventy-five cents per acre, and that there is enough timber on top, and coal in the ground, to last seventy-five years. He urged the League to buy it.

Mr. T. Thomas Fortune, editor of the New York *Age,* of New York, gave us an interesting talk on "The Logic of Business Development."

Isaiah T. Montgomery, of Mound Bayou, Miss., gave an account of a Negro city there, owned and controlled by Negroes.

Rev. S. L. Davis, of Hobson City, Ala., who is also the Mayor of that city, told us about the founding of the Negro city.

The Rev. J. W. E. Bowen, of Alabama, closed with a stirring and forcible address. The session closed to meet in Richmond, Va., next year.

Yours, respectfully submitted,

THOMAS W. BURTON, M. D.

Springfield, Ohio.

As a Christian Worker

CHAPTER IX

AS A CHRISTIAN WORKER

CERTAINLY we are to profit by reading the acts of others, whether they are right or wrong, good or bad. History may be defined as a divine institution which was intended by our Maker to assist in the progress of developing man.

Very often by reading the acts of others has come a warning to me; their footprints seen in the history which indicate their fate tell me that a like fate may befall me should the precedents be disregarded; and as near as I can I try to follow that infallible rule, that is: Do unto others as I would have them do unto me.

One of the greatest pleasures of my life is Sunday-school work. Although a busy medical practitioner, unless there is something very urgent, I must spend the Sunday-school hour with the children and young folks. It is the duty of every Christian to study the Book of books,

which is the Holy Bible. By familiarizing ourselves with this book, by studying it daily—which one will have to do in order to become familiar with it—then we will depend more upon God when there comes a succession of falls, fountain of tears, upward struggles and debased and bleeding heart, and not tell our troubles to man. Man may mean all right, but he has another friend, to whom he will divulge your secrets, and yet at the same time he is supposed to be in sympathy with you. When you find yourself deceived you will think of the words of the Psalmist David when he complaineth of his enemies' treachery: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. But then, O Lord, be merciful unto me and raise me up, that I may requite them." (Psalm 41: 9, 10.)

I find, if we live as God would like to have us live, when the storms of vexations, disappointments, and besetments overtake us, if we turn to this blessed Book we will find consolation, as did the children of Israel when assured

DR. THOMAS W. BURTON AND FAMILY.

by Moses, while being pursued by the Egyptians, if they stand still they will see the salvation of the Lord manifested. (Ex. 14: 13.) And while we thus divest ourselves of all intellectual pride and enter into the realm of wisdom we can truly say, with assurance, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." (Prov. 3: 17.)

It takes men and women of moral courage to accomplish these things. All honor to our great and good women, who are doing so very much for our young people as well as our older ones. We have so many good women who are well informed and could do a great deal for the uplifting of our young people, but they are too timid to launch out. We must first have confidence in ourselves, then by our works and deeds others will be helped.

I admire a woman who delights in working with the hand as well as the head; who, when she works, has something to show for her labor; and wherever she may chance to be, can adapt herself to the surroundings, and there remain without assumption. These qualities we can find in

the person of Mrs. Henry Linden, of Springfield, Ohio, who is the author of "Scraps of Time, Etc.," and who deserves great commendation for what she has accomplished by her own efforts and energy.

It was during the time I was acting superintendent of North Street African Methodist Episcopal Sunday-school, when there was a Sinking Fund Society organized in the Sunday-school for the purpose of helping children who could not come to the Sunday-school for the lack of proper clothing and encouragement. After our usual collection for the Sunday-school there was a basket passed, marked "Sinking Fund," and in it was placed one cent from each one present (if they had it), and this money was turned over to the treasurer of that society, whose officers consisted of a president, secretary, and treasurer.

There was a standing lookout committee, whose duty it was to look after those children who were so unfortunate as not to have suitable clothes for church and Sunday-school. And to my surprise we found dozens of children who

DR. THOMAS W. BURTON'S RESIDENCE,
Springfield, Ohio.

did not and do not go to any Sunday-school nor church. Some of these children live in alleys, and streets, too, a distance of one square from the church. I find it so in every city. In the first place, the parents of these children will have to become interested in sending the child or children to the Sunday-school, and have them to understand that, in case the child or children fail to attend Sunday-school after they have been clothed by the Sinking Fund Committee, the said clothes are confiscated.

We find a great many children, though comparatively naked, yet they refused to be clothed by that committee on account of their peculiar pride or feeling of independence. I have seen some of those children who came to Sunday-school by the aid of this committee contribute one cent to the Sinking Fund within one month after they were in attendance in the Sunday-school themselves. These children should be impressed that they are the future Church and that all the cares and responsibilities of the Church will some day fall upon them.

I assure you that this organization was a great success and is to-day.

I find the reason why so many Sunday-schools stay on the drag is, because they lack the proper interest on the part of the superintendents and teachers in the Sunday-school work. The superintendent should be one among the first at Sunday-school, and always on time; and when the time comes to open he should do so if there are only three present besides himself or herself, as the case may be.

There should be a great deal of singing in the Sunday-school; such songs as children can sing, and fancy. If you want to suit the child along this line, sing something quick and lively. Poor singing in Sunday-school sounds very discouraging to me. Good singing will keep the Sunday-school together a great deal better than a set of poor teachers. I mean by that, teachers who will not study the Sunday-school lesson, only on Saturday night or Sunday morning just before going to Sunday-school.

The teachers who look over their lessons in that manner can not interest a class an hour concerning that lesson. But the teacher who reads the connection between the lessons, and reads the lessons as well once a day the week through, can

interest any class an hour or two hours; this is what experience has taught me. Teachers should attend weekly teachers' meetings and familiarize themselves with "Moninger," or some training for service course. Each class should be numbered and designated by a beautiful card suspended over each class by a nice and neat little chain, and these fastened to a rod, movable, so that they can all be gathered up after Sunday-school.

There should be two banners in the Sunday-school room: one for the primary and intermediate classes, and the other for the Bible or advanced classes.

No one should be elected as superintendent of a Sunday-school who is not competent to demonstrate or will not demonstrate the Sunday-school lesson or lessons.

The superintendent should see to it that strangers are cared for, make them feel welcome, and place them in suitable classes.

I find that the Sinking Fund Society connected with the Sunday-school does a great deal of good to those schools where there is a general impression among the children who do not at-

tend any Sunday-school, and to a great many of those who do, that if I put on the very best I have or am able to get and go down to or up to, as the case may be, to that Sunday-school, they always make fun of me. I do n't believe that I will go about them.

I have seen some Sunday-schools where the child really had a right to think so. I have known parents to fix up their child or children to send them off to one of the Sunday-schools on time, and the child or children would only go as far as the church door, and pass on and play until about the time Sunday-school is out, then go home and tell their parents that they had been to Sunday-school.

Well, they had been to the door.

I find that some Sunday-schools and churches are like individuals in this, that they reach the place where they become selfish. We should ever keep before us the exhortation of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one to another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4: 32.)

Dr. Thomas William Burton having the connubial knot tied,
August 3, 1893, to Miss Hattie B. Taylor.

People Should Think for Themselves

CHAPTER X

PEOPLE SHOULD THINK FOR THEMSELVES

It really amuses me sometimes to see how little some people think for themselves, especially when they have been advised by one who has always proved to be a friend to them. Still they put their business in the hands of those who deprive them of their substance. At the same time they try to impress one that they are very wise and honest with it.

The old folks as well as the young ones will do likewise. While talking with one of these peculiar people on one occasion, the following verses came to me:

I AM NOT MAD.

I am not mad, but very sad,
To think how they retreat;
The stylish young as well as old
Are always on the beat.

They beat the rich, they beat the poor,
They beat their supposed friend;
They clamor after nonsense things,
And get beat themselves in the end.

Their debts and deeds they will not pay
Unless by force they're made;
Hard times, they say, and wages low;
Are always asking aid.

It's not the amount which makes us rich,
But it is what we save, instead;
Economy is a noble thing,
Look not upon it with a dread.

There is another class of people who are easily influenced and led by those whose very intentions are to tear down. Yet, while those who are being led are innocent in a sense, they forget to use their own common sense in regard to what the future may bring to them. For it is certain that they will be scattered one from the other by their own doings if let alone.

God deals with individuals just as He deals with nations, and He deals with nations just as He deals with individuals.

A Group of Members of the Ohio State Medical Association, in their Fifth Annual Session, Xenia, Ohio, June 9 and 10, 1909.

There was a time, before the flood, when God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil; this provoked God's wrath and caused the flood. (Gen. 6:5.)

After the flood, and that the earth had been replenished, the people had become prolific as the sand of the sea, generation after generation had come upon the scene of action, the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. They became so prosperous in the land of Shinar, luxury and earthly pleasure at their command, they fancied within themselves that they would go to heaven in their own way; but God said to the Trinity, "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." (Gen. 11:7.)

After this was done the people were scattered abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, speaking different tongues, pursuing different vocations for a livelihood, and they began to mold customs peculiar to each language.

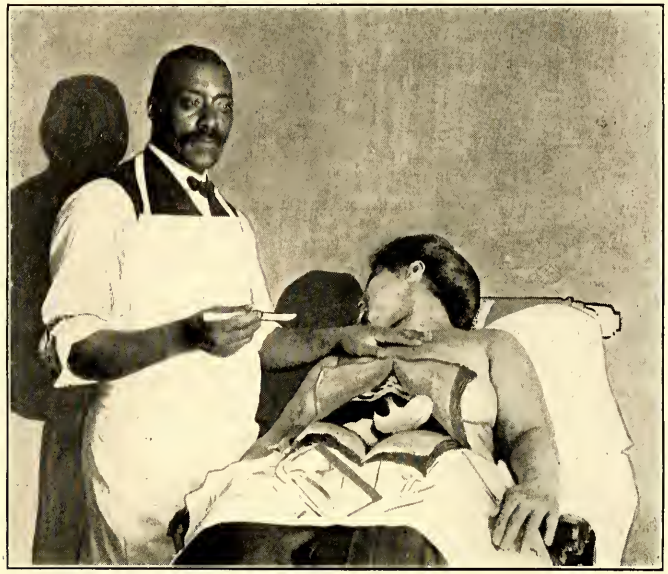
Thus God showed them that the building of Babel must cease.

So many people to-day are clamoring after new-fangled teachings, running pellmell to Sunday baseball, Sunday park amusements, Sunday excursions, and many other unnecessary things, —all for the love of money.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim. 6: 3-10.)

If individuals cultivate this love for money to the extent that they forget the Sabbath, and do not hold it as a day devoted to pious meditation, a day intended as a principal testimony of faith in the Creator of the universe, they too forget the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. If they persist in going this way they shall be punished according to the fruit of their doings. (Jer. 21: 14.)

If one has a great deal of business relations with different kinds of people, that person is no longer disappointed in them and can always read them aright. Of course, we have no power



By request of the family (of the decedent), Dr. Burton is performing an autopsy on the largest woman who lived in Springfield for years, at the time of her death weighing 500 pounds, December, 1909.

of penetrating into their very souls and seeing the underlying motives which are at work there, but we can see and read enough so as to be warned of them while dealing with them or while being in their presence.

I find it good policy to always speak well of a person unless you are talking to that person; if so, then you can tell him or her just what you please. When Christ was here upon earth in the form of man, mingling and dealing with men, He always spoke of the highest, the best, and the truest in men. We should always hold up and keep before us the honor of our great men and women; we must make our own worthy history.

A few months after the death of Paul Laurence Dunbar there was a day set apart in Springfield, Ohio, for his memorial, and of which I wrote the following verses:

ALL HONOR TO THE DAY.

All honor to the day we celebrate,
Bedecked as it is in flowers
In memory of him who won his fame
Through sunshine, clouds, and showers.

In a perpetual tone this day should be kept,
Each year as the days go by,
Fresh in the minds of the American youth,
And its purpose should never die.

Teach them it's the day that we have set apart
To show our esteeming love
For the one who shoved his poetic pen
With a gift from Him who is above.

Teach them that a mighty man has fallen,
Though young when he left the stage;
That he was a genius among his fellows,
He was a monument of his age.

He was one who stood erect and stalwart,
Who could be seen near and far;
He was master of his situation,—
All honor to Paul Laurence Dunbar!

May this memorial be an incentive
For the young and for the old;
May it be kept alive for generations,
And its interest be forever told.

May it be told with growing interest,
Each year as we chance to meet,
That a man is measured by his worth and fitness,
In honor of such is a day we keep.

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